

SPRINGFIELD RESIDENCE  
PRE-INAUGURAL

DRAWER 9

ELECTION 1860

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# Abraham Lincoln's Political Career through 1860

## Springfield Residence Pre-Inaugural

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

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Albion. - Springfield Residence -  
Black, Jeremiah S. Pre-Inaugural  
(Buchanan's Atty. Gen. & later Sec. of State)  
Piatt, Judge

(Note: The top of this page was written, and then cut off and appended to page 4.)

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Thursday - Arrived to day. - was taken by the committee to Mr Lincoln's house where we had supper. Mr & Mrs L expressed themselves glad to see us. Mr Lincoln sat at the head of the table with two boys clambering over him chattering like jays & eating like monkeys. Wondered if the boys would continue their domestic practices at the White House. Did not put my queries into words however. Mr Lincoln asked about Schenck. Had no opportunity however to put in a word. After supper we taken to the house of Mr South about in law of Mr Lincoln. Found them plain unassuming sort of people. I must put me through a cross examination on the subject of central said he did not care for offices - but would get after a few contracts if he could. Turned into a feather bed and slept from fatigue.

Wednesday Saw Mr Lincoln this morning at his office surrounded all the time by country people. Met again Verbois took him into my confidence - Told me that Fremont would have more to do with making up the cabinet than any one else. Doubt whether Fremont would favor Schenck. An old democrat does not harmonize with an old democrat. Lincoln tilted himself back in a chair in his office and putting his long feet upon the round

saw with his thin legs drawn up and presented a most extraordinary appearance. He has no dignity whatever. He is on the most familiar terms with the people here who call him to his face either Abe or Lincoln. I saw however that he has a sort of arched reserve. A fellow under the influence of liquor pushed his way in and addressing Mr Lincoln in a rough familiar way became quite offensive. Mr Lincoln's homely face assumed a cold expression that told on the man who soon became silent.

I heard him say to day that the trouble at the South was a political matter that would blow itself out in a few days - He called it a wind gust and illustrated it by a very funny and very dirty story.

Thursday - It is really amusing to see the manner in which the people take Lincoln to themselves. His triumph is the triumph of each. The town is full of the roughest country folk many of them from a distance and each speaks of old Abe as though he were one of the family and the more ludicrous is to hear men aged enough to be his father calling him old Abe. Met Mrs Lincoln out shopping walked home with her. Asked me if I thought there would be any trouble with the South. Told her I doubted whether her husband would be inaugurated at Washington. At first she was alarmed and said I ought to talk to Mr Lincoln that Mr Lincoln did not believe there would be any "fight at all" She broke into a violent somewhat ungrammatical attack on the Abolitionists. Tried to take her into my confidence & say a word in behalf of Schenck but she seemed possessed of a blind fury and abused Howard until we separated. Felt a crawling sensation up my back, when I think of these people occupying the White House. Wrote to Schenck



Monday. Sick all night from an attack of hot  
 bisquits and feather bed. Louise told me that  
 Mrs S. said I was to be Private Secretary Sais  
 if we had to live in the White House she would die  
 of mortification. Calmed her fears by assuring her  
 that Mr Nicolay had been selected for that place  
 and that, far as I could observe Mr N did not  
 seem to fear the consequences. Saw Mr L a good  
 deal to day, but always in a crowd. Tried to  
 draw him out on the Cabinet but failed. Mithat  
 his unworldly roughness and positive vulgarity, there  
 is a certain sort of reserve he can put on  
 that exhibits a self possession and will that takes  
 the place of dignity and repels approach.  
 I observe however that this comes out only when he  
 encounters people of culture. With the ignorant  
 he turns them off with funny and very dirty stories.  
 These stories are strangely to the point and he  
 seems to have an inexhaustible supply. He is  
 the political Esop of our time. Stacked out the mail  
 in the evening and for the first time heard Mr  
 S. express an opinion on Schenck, when Mrs L  
 broke in with lively abuse of Seward. I listened  
 good naturedly or rather with indifference and  
 when she ended said quietly "Billy Seward would  
 be hurt in his feelings were he to hear that opinion  
 of him" I hastily said "he never would hear from  
 me" "Then" added L. Mrs Lincoln would be greatly  
 disappointed" This knocked us both over and  
 I shouldered off. Before I could do so Mrs Lincoln  
 got in a stunner by saying "I only say what  
 you have said a thousand times only, I say  
 it to a man's face and I intend to say it"

- to the nasty old abolitionist the first time I see him. Went to bed sick of the whole concern. Could not sleep. There may be men who know the people Mr L intends to call about him but they are not in Springfield or if they are they keep secrets better than any lot I ever encountered before. There is one trait in the President elect that is remarkable and that is the cool indifference with which he accepts the situation. This may come of ignorance and it may come of superior ability. When within in a crowd I believe the first when I remember ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> of his shrewd observations and his debate with Douglass I believe the last. I am impressed with the feeling that there is no chance for Schenck. Since first place he had no hand in the nomination and in the second, he is not the sort of man to harmonize with L. He is a gentleman. I hear much talk about Judel all concur in asserting that if he is not in the Cabinet he will certainly have a hand in making it. Doubt it. I make fun of Judel but then he makes fun of every body. Gulp and nearly put my eyes out smiling to S. said "Our President elect's great trait is shrewdness commonly called cunning. He will make his Cabinet as he would swap horses expecting to be cheated and determined to cheat if possible I have not much hope. He does not believe ~~any~~ more than you do of the grave trouble at the South and will probably make up his Cabinet in the old style of paying off political services and providing for the succession. The only evidence

I have of Seward being ever consulted is ~~another~~ <sup>another</sup> Porter Mrs Lincoln keeps up. She must have heard something from her husband to start her in that direction. No telling however you know what a violent hair brained woman she is. I wish you were here. You & L are old whigs you know

Saw a saddy queer looking young man seated at a table in a room of the State House introduced to him as a Captain Ellsworth. Has elaborated a tremendous Louave Army that it is said Mr Lincoln favors. Suggested to the Greek that a Louave was not made out of a pair of baggy breeches but was a born devil developed in Algiers. Mr Lincoln told me afterwards that it was a harmless hobby that he had no objection to have the young fellow ride and illustrated by the butcherman's horse that he was offering for sale, some one objected that the animals head was to large when the butch man responded that the Animal carried it himself. This I record as the only decent story I have heard from him so far. Put me through a cross examination as to my past life, A little awkward as it was done in the presence of a crowd I dont know why he did unless he has designs on me such as I have heard whispered about. I discovered that his literary education does not amount to much. I doubt whether he has ever read a book other than one on law or politics. There is a talk of his going to Chicago. If he does it is to have his Cabinet made up for him. Had a talk with Hansecomb. H. says Lincoln will make his own cabinet and rule out candidates for the Presidency. H. tells me that Lincoln is not to be ruled or influenced by any one and shakes his head mysteriously as if he knew all about it. If he did it would be in the Herald.

Talked to Fremont about it and told him in confidence of my anxiety to have S in the Cabinet. I thought it was a good suggestion but declined making it. Said he thought I ought to go to Chicago where he would meet <sup>with</sup> the leading men and be influenced for good. I listened gravely to my belief that we were going to have trouble, - Could not realize it to the same extent as I did. Thinks with L. that it will blow over. I is a thoughtful able man and ought to be President. It is strange to see the present ignorant sister President of the United States while a statesman like Fremont is not even consulted. All the talk here is about Jewell. Jewell is I suppose some politician who organized the forces of Illinois for Lincoln. I tell me I do not appreciate Lincoln, that he is a great man. Well, he may be he certainly is a very extraordinary one. But I cannot help believing that his success will depend on his having an able Cabinet. Told I that Mr Lincoln ought to take two or three able & popular men from the South and suggested Henry Winterhairs. Asked me questions about Davis but thought that the men who had made the fight ought to be selected. I suggested that the proposed trip Chicago when Lincoln would fall into the hands of the politicians not good as I did not believe the influence would be for the best. He thought differently. Said Lincoln had been out of public life so long that local politicians

had undue weight with him and that it would be well to bring him in contact with leading men as soon as possible.

Saturday Read Prescott Smith's letter to the President elect - Seemed to amuse him hugely. Said "so Mr Gamitt promises to deliver me without damage in Washington?" I replied that I believed there might be no hazard in the delivery but if there were Mr Gamitt certainly had the power to ~~insure~~ <sup>insure</sup> ~~care~~ safety. "You think there is some danger" I think there is to be trouble - the shape it may assume I am not able to divine. "Yes Yes" he added laughing "You scared Mrs Lincoln into a chicken fit but I don't believe these fellows are as bad as that" I told him, I thought they meant business and he threw up my ~~own~~ <sup>own</sup> San the Union speech to me and laughed immoderately. I told him that was for Lincoln - but that I knew the Southerners people I thought and what was worse the Southerners knew the North. "Why" he said they could not raise enough money to arm & equip a regiment - These cursed Yankees have made all the money & have all the material - Why they could not get a gun without the consent of New England - "He continued in this strain the crowd joining in. I felt awkward for they all quoted my speech on me, I noticed however when I said with some vehemence that for every soldier we would raise at the North the Democrats would recruit two, that the Democratic party was a fighting party as Schenck & I had discovered in Egypt while our people were respectable peace men he became grave - "Think he will go to Baltimore & this RR yet -

~~Monday~~ Asked I this morning what church the President elect was in the habit of attending - he answered with a broad grin "the Broad Church" Saw him shortly after breakfast making towards the State House. He certainly presented the strangest most uncouth and almost hideous appearance. Tall, bony angular with limbs out of all proportion - hand shouldered his every movement awkward as if each part of him moved on its own separate impulse.

Chicago - Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> 1860

Worried by sail road travelling. Found at the Belmont House a parlor and two bed rooms provided for Mr & Mrs Lincoln. Louise & self with formal meals <sup>provided</sup> in the parlor. At whose instance this arrangement was made I don't know. It does not suit me I never yet was made an appendage to any man great or small and but for my interest in my best friend I would throw up & quit. There is a simplicity in Mr Lincoln's manner that but for his coarseness would be very winning. There is however a something back of all this one can not get hold of as if the simplicity were put on. I was told by Pin Springfield that the name of honest old Abe was given him in derision - as it generally is. The fact is shrewdness that is only another name for cunning is not a pleasant quality. All day yesterday in the cars, I could not keep constantly the clear thoughtful

earnest face of Trumbull with dead countenance of our President Neph to Louis Napoleon it is the deadest face I ever saw and I suppose the Contrast makes his smile winning. It would keep amazingly for him to cultivate a beard - That much of his poor unfortunate face would be concealed. Told him to let his beard grow and he seemed to look back of my eyes like lightning thought out the motive at which laughed immoderately.

At all the stations on the road the people were assembled & called for speeches. He responded in a very quaint delicious way. He said for example at the first stopping place -

My fellow citizens You want to see the man you have elected President - Well I am curious to see the people who elected me - So we are both gratified - We have had a warm contest but now it is all over and I hope we will do well. I think of the people as an old neighbor of mine did of the women kind - At last he got married and during the honey moon was asked how he liked it as far as he got well he said he had not got far but on the whole he believed a woman would treat you right if you treated her right and so I think of the people I wish you a good day" The crowd laughed and cheered. Howard's return was something exceedingly comic in his manner. This is a specimen of his species. All were brief & all different.

Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 60 At breakfast this morning I again called his attention to the reports from the South. He did not pay much attention but said: "Look here P. I've been turning this thing over in my mind and I have an argument against Secession - If one state can go out why will thirty states can leave one. This would be in effect turning the one state out." Told him I thought the argument conclusive if any body could be got to listen but was of the opinion that the time for argument had passed we were on the eve of a fight.

"Then you go scaring Mrs Lincoln again?" he exclaimed laughing.

"I ain't so easy scared as you are" exclaimed Mrs L in wrath "but Judge Piatt is right. The Southern people will fight these abolitionists, I tell you and they ought to and if you have abolitionists in your Cabinet they ought to fight you."

"In that case my dear I'll put the army in your hands - you are the best fighting character I know."

This led to a personal controversy, anything but pleasant, to strangers, and Louis & I hurried through our breakfast and got away.

Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> Heavy Snow Storm - Schenck arrived - Lincoln said this morning at breakfast that in going to Washington he had to recollect that Jackson's administration was through a continuous storm and



He supposes that at certain intervals these disturbances were as necessary to our political atmosphere as storms are to equalize and regulate our atmosphere. I suppose my thought was reflected on my face, he is very quick for he immediately added "that is if Old Hickory can stand it". The idea of this great joker whose principal attribute is cunning comparing him self to a man whose great trait was courage is a little ludicrous.

Great crowds of long haired exuberant ~~belated~~ <sup>hot gospellers</sup> continually calling on Lincoln. A civil time one may have with these fellows if the South does drive things to extremes as I believe they will and really, looking upon the men about to take control, I do not blame the South. There is a continual outpouring of blind fanaticism. I notice however that I take very little part in this sort of thing but when pressed turns the subject by a dirty story. I have heard him repeat himself in this respect only two or three times. He is a living Rabelais with a supply of foul funny anecdotes that is inexhaustible. Some of these people attacked Fremont to day for his speech at Springfield. I made no comment. He has a relucence positively wonderful. But his ignorance refuses to conceal. I tried him again on literary subjects after breakfast. He treated me to a cross examination of some minutes then changed the subject. I doubt his ever

reading a book. He said the Bible was an  
 excellent work to draw illustrations from  
 as every body had read it but not speak  
 with much reverence for the sacred volume  
 Had Schenck & Hamlin at dinner, talk  
 turned on troubles at the South. Schenck  
 said it would resolve itself into Committee  
 and resolutions - To which I <sup>assented</sup> ~~expressed~~ <sup>freely</sup> said the South meant  
 business and that if an attempt was made  
 to force the people into submission the bene-  
 vocrats at the North would assist their  
 brethren - L. again told of my fighting  
 Mrs Lincoln and raised quite a laugh by  
 saying that a full of pork in Cincinnati  
 had scared me - This was said good na-  
 turally but had a sarcasm all the same  
 Mrs L came to my assistance and assaulted  
 the abolitionists in the face of H much  
 to the entertainment of Schenck. Lincoln  
 tried to stop her, and made things worse  
 S. did not keep himself by egging ~~them~~  
 Lady on - Mrs L I believe to be the  
 only person living who can make Lincoln  
 mad - They are rowing all the time, and  
 in such domestic difference he grows se-  
 rious and says sharp things - Shades  
 of Washington & Jefferson what a set to  
 occupy the White House -  
 In the evening Mrs L came back from a  
 party and sat in our room until long  
 after midnight Schenck & Gen R. were  
 with us. Mrs L took the rocking chair

and rocked violently talking all the time. I wish his keen sense of humor nearly convulsed us by drawing her out. She laughed louder than any.

Nov. 24 It told me to day that the politicians were jealous of my influence over and nearness to Lincoln. Poor devils they dont know that I have as little influence over the great jester as his wife and God knows I dont want any. The time approaches and it is not far off when Lincoln will need me far more than I need Lincoln. When the storm comes these political rats will run to their holes and leave this uncouth strange creature to the peltings of the pitiless blast when dirty stories however amusing will be of no avail. If a war comes as I believe it is coming it will be brief the land for a little space will be covered with tents. Rebels in the South and traitors at the North will drive us like sheep and none of our lot see this -

# Lincoln Believed He Was Unfit to Occupy the President's Chair

Dr. B. J. Cigrand, National President American Flag Day Association, in the Chicago Tribune.

1915

Do we of today understand Abraham Lincoln better than those who were actually at his side? It seems we do, at least the evidence is pre-eminent on our side. That Lincoln did not seek the presidency can now be proved by a number of testimonies which would stand in any court of fair minded men or in the council of fair faced women.

Lincoln has been accused by all his biographers and by hundreds of public speakers of having as early as the campaign for United States senator, when he was defeated by Douglas, entertained the ambition of seeking in every way possible the highest office in the land. This claim is especially placed against him because of a remark he made just before he was defeated by Douglas, his friends cautioning him not to induce Douglas to declare himself on certain questions of slavery, as it sure would destroy his chances for election to the senate, and Lincoln quickly replied that he was after "bigger game" than the senate.

The last year has brought to light some few strong points, which reinforce me in my conclusion that to accuse Lincoln of seeking the presidency is not only contrary to fact, but a deliberate misrepresentation of his personal feelings in the matter. There was sold in New York a letter which belonged to the Maj. William H. Lambert collection, and this shows that Lincoln even as late as April 29 of 1860 wrote to Trumbull, who was the leading candidate for the republican nomination, and Lincoln's lines read:

As you request, I will be entirely frank. You may confidently rely, however, that by no advice or council of mine shall my pretensions be pressed to the point of endangering our common cause. Now as to my opinion about the chances of others (besides Trumbull) in Illinois, I think neither Seward nor Bates can carry Illinois if Douglas shall be on the track, and that either of them can if he shall not be. I rather think that McLean is stronger in Illinois, taking all sections of it, than either Seward or Bates, and I think Seward the weakest of the three.

I have no objection to McLean, except his age, but that objection seems to occur to everyone, and it is possible it might leave him no stronger than the others.

A word now for your own special benefit. You had better write no letter which can be distorted into opposition or quasi-opposition to me. There are men on the constant watch for such things, out of which to prejudice my particular friends against you. While I have no more suspicion of you than I have of my best friend living, I am kept in constant struggle against questions of this sort. I have hesitated to write this paragraph lest you should suspect I do it for my own benefit and not for yours, but on reflection I conclude you will not suspect me. Let no eye but your own see this—not that there is anything wrong or even ungenerous about it, but it would be misunderstood.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This splendid letter, which has been preserved to us, though Lincoln did not wish another eye save that of Trumbull to see it, throws new light on his liberal, unselfish attitude for the presidency. He here is working for Trumbull and the hour of the convention is practically on.

While in Springfield he wrote to a friend by the name of Pickett a letter which contains the following words:

As to the other matter you kindly mention, I must in candor say I do not think myself fit for the presi-

dency. I certainly am flattered and gratified that some friends think of me in that connection, but I really think it best for our cause that no concerted effort such as you suggest should be made.

Let this be considered confidential.  
A. LINCOLN.

This is rather fitting the mark, for "Honest Abe" dead, as well as in the living flesh, could be trusted as speaking and writing the truth. He did most emphatically decline being considered for the presidency.

Another item which has just come to the surface, though many hundreds of people might have associated the fact with the candidacy, refers to a bit of history which has been recently disclosed in the political correspondence of Governor Oglesby, and if Lincoln acted like a candidate for the presidency even as late as May 10, 1860, that shrewd politician Oglesby, did not discern it, for when the Illinois state republican convention was in session in Springfield on May 9, 1860, Oglesby was a delegate and made this remark:

"I am informed that a distinguished citizen of Illinois, and one whom Illinois will even be delighted to honor, is present, and I wish to move that this body invite him to a seat upon the stand." He paused a moment, and added in a loud voice: "Abraham Lincoln."

There resulted a most enthusiastic applause and cheering was most hearty. No way could be made through the dense audience, and Abraham Lincoln was borne bodily over the heads and shoulders of the delegates and visitors and carried to the rostrum. Mr. Lincoln was called on for a speech and he arose and addressed the audience. He never mentioned the presidency and only spoke of most commonplace local matters and in all used but seventy-two words. Does this look like a campaigner seeking the presidency, when the national convention at Chicago was only six days away?

He sure acted as though the mentioning of his name for the position displeased him and he sure did not come to the platform and eulogize his record, nor praise his stand on this political issue, nor did he strenuously seek to impress his hearers with the story, "I am the right man for the position and if you will vote for me I will soon put the national house in order." None of this came from his lips—he did not wish the office and he sought only the justification of the cause he was engaged in, namely the preservation of the union and the salvation of the poem of the Declaration of Independence.

But fortunately we need not altogether rely on the written page bearing the signature of Abraham Lincoln, for there has of late been found a man who was a close personal friend and supporter of Lincoln who in an interview with Arthur M. Evans, the author and historian, called upon and visited some of Lincoln's friends who reside in Springfield, and with Dr. William Jayne he had the following interesting conversation:

"Lincoln was our great citizen, of course, but who of us ever thought he

would become president; in fact, I do not think he himself had that dream for many years. In October, 1859, I was talking with Mr. Lincoln—this was about the time that the presidential talk began to be heard all over the country—and I asked him how about it; he said: 'William, I am not fit to be president, but I would like to be attorney general of the United States.'"

WRIGHT



# Words about Lincoln by a Schoolmaster

The following extracts are from the words of Dr Newton Bateman, Lincoln's "little friend, the big schoolmaster," referred to in the center column:

Soon after his [Lincoln's] first nomination for the Presidency, finding his modest little house on Eighth Street, in Springfield, too small for the throngs of visitors which pressed upon him from all parts of the country, his friends installed him in the Executive Chamber of the old State House, where he continued to hold daily receptions till his departure for Washington the following February.

My office during the whole of that period of nearly eight months, was in a room adjoining the one used by Mr Lincoln, and communicating with it by a door which was usually wide open,—at Mr Lincoln's request—to secure for both rooms a better ventilation, and to afford relief to his often over-crowded chamber, the surplus frequently overflowing into my office while awaiting their turn to see Mr Lincoln. Nearly every day, during the summer months, he would pass from one room to the other, shaking hands and chatting with his friends and callers.

It was during these eight months in which I heard and saw him every day, for several hours, that I had excellent opportunities of observing and studying the man.

I do not need to say to you that there was, in Mr Lincoln, a quiet but keen sense of humor. No reference to him would be complete that should omit this characteristic.

His manner in these pleasantries is not to be described. It was usually very quiet—never boisterous, but so piquant and peculiar; such a twinkle in his eye, such working of his mobile face, such lurking fun in his tones, and such quaint drolleries of expression.

One thing in this connection is noteworthy; in not one of hundreds of stories which I heard him tell, was there the semblance of malice or venom—no personal cut or sting. However broad the travesty, keen the wit, or side-shaking the burlesque, he was careful never to wound the feelings or trifle with the sensibilities of any man, present or absent. His humor was the overflow of a gentle and tender nature, and as free from malice as the prattle of a child.

He would tell a story with as much delight and zest at his own expense as at the expense of another,—rather more, if anything, I often thought.

His patience and good nature seemed absolutely proof against all the petty annoyances of life—I often saw him depressed, bowed with grief, mournfully sad—or stirred with indignation—but irritated, and ruffled in temper, I never saw him.

He was one day playing a game of chess with Judge Treat, in the little room back of the Law Library of which I have spoken. At a certain stage of the game, "Tad" came to summon him to dinner. Knowing the boy's genius for mischief, Mr Lincoln kept him away from the table with his long arms, still watching the game, till at length the little rogue's assaults ceased, and the father relaxed his vigilance. The next moment the table rose bodily in the air, tilted, and chess-board and chess-men rolled on the floor!

The good Judge, much amazed, advised summary and condign punishment; but Mr Lincoln, after a moment's futile effort to capture Tad, who made fast time out of the State house, laughingly remarked, (referring to the state of the game when the catastrophe happened), "I guess that upheaval was rather fortunate for you, Judge!" and quietly put on his hat and followed Tad home.

The day after his nomination, Mr Ashman, president of the Convention, with a large party of distinguished gentlemen, members of the Convention, arrived in Springfield to inform Mr Lincoln of his nomination, and to receive his reply.

Mr Lincoln had requested me to escort this party to his house. Mr Ashman's address, and Mr Lincoln's reply are matters of history. The aptness of Mr Lincoln's words, and the unstudied dignity of his manner, in that trying moment, in the little crowded parlor, surprised and delighted his guests, few of whom had ever seen him before. As he sat down, Mr Boutwell, afterwards Secretary of the Treasury, and Senator from Massachusetts, whispered to me: "They told me he was a rough diamond—I protest against the adjective—nothing could have been more elegant and appropriate."

In his oral reply to the committee, he said that he would in due time send them a written note, formally accepting the nomination. Late one afternoon, a few days afterward, he being alone in his room in the state house, and I in mine, he called me in his usual cheery way. Handing me a note written in pencil, he said: "That is my reply to the good people whom you brought to my house the other night. I think it is all right, but grammar, you know, is not my strong hold; and as several persons will probably read that little thing, I wish you would look it over and see if it needs doctoring anywhere."

I took the paper and slowly read it through. It was addressed to the Hon. George Ashman. In it was this sentence: "The declaration of principles and sentiments which accompanied your letter meets my approval, and it shall be my care to not violate it, or disregard it, in any part."

Handing the note back to Mr Lincoln, I said that the language was all strictly correct, with one very slight exception—almost too trivial to mention. "Well, what is it?" said he, "I wish to be correct without any exception, however trivial." "Well, then, Mr Lincoln," I replied, "it would, perhaps, be as well to transpose the 'to' and 'not' in that sentence"—pointing to the one just quoted. Mr Lincoln looked at it a moment and said: "Oh, you think I'd better turn those two little fellows end to end, eh?"

"Yes," I said, "I guess you had"—and he did.

On the eleventh of February, 1861, on the day preceding his fifty-second birthday, Mr Lincoln set out for Washington.

I accompanied him to the railroad station, and stood by his side on the platform of the car, when he delivered that memorable farewell to his friends and neighbors. Of those, an immense concourse had assembled to bid him good bye. The day was dark and chill, and a drizzling rain had set in. The signal bell had rung, and all was in readiness for the departure, when Mr Lincoln appeared on

the front platform of the special car—removed his hat, looked out for a moment upon the sea of silent, upturned faces, and heads bared in loving reverence and sympathy, regardless of the rain; and, in a voice broken and tremulous with emotion and a most unutterable sadness, yet slow and measured and distinct, and with a certain prophetic far-off look, which no one who saw can ever forget, began: "My friends, no one, not in my position, can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is greater, perhaps, than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded, except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I can not succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him; and upon the same Almighty Being I place my reliance and support. And I hope you, my friends, will pray that I may receive that divine assistance, without which I can not succeed, and with which success is certain. Again, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

His pale face was literally wet with tears as he re-entered the car, and the train rolled out of the city, which Abraham Lincoln was to enter no more—till, his great work finished, he would come back from the war, a victor and a conqueror, though with the seal of death upon his visage. Some politicians derided the solemn words of that farewell—but I knew they were the utterances of his inmost soul—never did speech of man move me as that did. Seeing every mournful tremor of those lips—noting every shadow that flitted over that face—catching every inflection of that voice—the words seemed to drop, every one, into my heart, and to be crystallized in my memory. I hurried back to my office, locked the door (for I felt that I must be alone), wrote out the address from memory, and had it published in city papers in advance of the reporters. And when the reports of the stenographers were published, they differed from mine in only two or three words, and as to even those, I have always believed that mine were right, for the speech was engraved on my heart and memory, and I had but to copy the engraving.

And so, Abraham Lincoln, left Springfield, and passed on to his great work, followed by the benediction and prayers, and by the anxieties too, of a loving people. Events soon proved that he had, indeed, undertaken a task greater than had been devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington.

The storm through which his brave heart and steady hands conducted the Nation, demonstrates the regency of moral ideas in history. Moral ideas are the mightiest things beneath God's throne—right and truth are imperial powers, armed with a Divine prerogative, and with the strength of a decree of God. And those were the forces that Lincoln was appointed to wield—these were the invisible legions that reinforced the armies of Liberty.

Lincoln saw and believed and felt all this—and this it was that made him strong. He recognized, as did no other American statesman of this century, the moral element in politics. He believed with all his intellect and soul, that freedom was right, and that bondage was



wrong—not merely inexpedient, impolitic, but wrong. This is the great, central, golden fact in his character.

It is impossible to account in any other way for the place that Abraham Lincoln has in our hearts, and in the heart of Christendom, today. Not his intellect, clear, robust and powerful as that was—not any masterliness of policy, for he was rather the interpreter of Providence and the agent of the popular will, than a Cromwellian originator of bold policies—not his personal appearance and presence, for he was homely in person, and without elegance or courtliness of manners; no, it is in the light and glory of his moral goodness, his lofty aims and his fidelity to truth, that he stands transfigured today.



## Lincoln's Birthday

I am using a personal photograph (but so remote in time as to be almost impersonal) by way of introduction to the Lincoln Day material in this number, because it illustrates my closest approach to Lincoln. The man whose hand was upon my shoulder was Newton Bateman. Lincoln used to call him "his little friend, the big schoolmaster." He was later my teacher as president of a prairie college and I was still later his successor in that office. But when Lincoln knew him he was the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the State of Illinois, in the years immediately preceding Lincoln's going to Washington as President. Again and again have I heard Doctor Bateman tell of the incidents of his association with Lincoln in those days. It was he who made the real Lincoln known to me. And I am thinking that I can not bring that greatest of Americans closer to the teachers and children of this State than through the words of my own teacher, written by the hand that I have felt upon my own shoulder—the last to press Lincoln's hand when he left Springfield for Washington.

A year ago this Lincoln Day, I was out beyond the Euphrates, near the place where Abraham, whose name after more than three thousand years was given to the boy Lincoln, lived before he began his migration toward the Promised Land. It is a long way that we have traveled from Abraham to Lincoln, and I have been thinking often of late that, if those who are discontented with America could but know the state of those who live near the cradle of the race, where Abraham started, they would find Lincoln's Land a paradise by comparison, for yonder are hunger and misery and persecution and daily peril of life and lack of most of those things which are the chief joy of our lives here in a free America.

~~502~~  
7/17/72

R.D.#2, Box 1042  
Mohnton, Pa. 19540  
12 July 1972

The Lincoln National Life Foundation  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

Thank you very much for the copy of Lincoln Lore No. 739 containing the review of Lamon's (or Black's) biography of Lincoln.

I neglected to mention in my previous letter that you may keep the Black and Judge Piatt memos. If you use them or quote from them, perhaps you would credit me with having brought them to light. Otherwise you may do with them as you wish.

*included  
in file*

Chauncey F. Black, as you probably are aware, was the son of Jeremiah S. Black, Buchanan's Attorney General and later, Secretary of State. Chauncey Black's son, Jeremiah Black, Jr., was married to my great-aunt, Mabel (Evans) Black. She is now living in California and will be coming east later this month to celebrate her 90th birthday with us. Through her indirectly, I recently acquired a dozen or so of the senior Jeremiah Black's letters including several relating to the investigation of the California land claims in 1860.

I will be happy to correspond with anyone who may be interested in the contents of the other Black letters.

Very truly yours,

*Evans C. Goodling, Jr.*  
Evans C. Goodling, Jr.







